

REMARKS

Claim 6 has been canceled. The limitation of claim 6 has been written into independent claims 1, 21 and 26. No new matter has been added.

Claim 9 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, because it is redundant in that it repeats the limitation of claim 5. Therefore, claim 9 has been canceled.

Claim 10 was amended to depend from claim 8.

Claims 1-4, 11, 12 and 26-30 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Hoffman (U.S. Patent 5,998,588). Applicant has amended the claims to include the limitation that the matrix is a tri-block copolymer matrix. This limitation was previously disclosed in claim 6 which the Examiner has indicated would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. The Examiner has indicated that this limitation is not suggested or disclosed in the prior art of record. Therefore, Applicant submits that this rejection has been overcome and requests reconsideration and allowance of the claims.

Claims 1, 11, 12, 13, 21-23 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Cubicciotti (U.S. Patent 6,342,389). Applicant has amended the claims to include the limitation that the matrix is a tri-block copolymer matrix. This limitation was previously disclosed in claim 6 which the Examiner has indicated would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. The Examiner has indicated that this limitation is not suggested or

disclosed in the prior art of record. Therefore, Applicant submits that this rejection has been overcome and requests reconsideration and allowance of the claims.

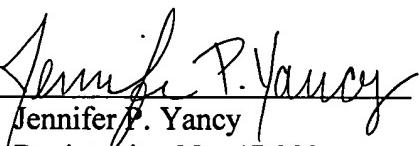
Claims 14 and 22 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hoffmann or Cubicciotti in view of Hamada (U.S. Patent 6, 177,181). Applicant has amended the claims to include the limitation that the matrix is a tri-block copolymer matrix. This limitation was previously disclosed in claim 6 which the Examiner has indicated would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. The Examiner has indicated that this limitation is not suggested or disclosed in the prior art of record. Therefore, Applicant submits that this rejection has been overcome and requests reconsideration and allowance of the claims.

The Examiner has indicated that claims 5-8, 15-20, 24-25 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Applicant has amended independent claims 1, 21 and 26 to include the limitation of claim 6. Therefore, Applicant asserts that the claims are now in condition for allowance.

The Examiner has indicated that claims 9-10 would be allowable if rewritten to overcome the rejection(s) under 35 U.S.C. 112, 2nd paragraph, set forth in the Office action and to include all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Claim 9 has been canceled. Claim 10 has been amended to depend from claim 8.

In view of the foregoing, Applicant respectfully submits that the art rejections are overcome by the amendments to claims 1, 21 and 26 to restrict the invention to include a tri-block copolymer matrix, and that the application is now in condition for allowance. Accordingly, favorable reconsideration and allowance of the application is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

By: 
Jennifer P. Yancy
Registration No. 47,003

JONES, TULLAR & COOPER, P.C.
P.O. Box 2266 Eads Station
Arlington, VA 22202
(703) 415-1500
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